

## 3.2 ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

PROJECT INFORMATION	
1. Project Title:	Statewide On-site Wastewater Treatment Systems Regulations State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Water Quality, P.O. Box 2231, Sacramento, CA 95812
2. Lead Agency Name and Address:	Box 2231, Sacramento, CA 95812
3. Contact Person and Phone Number:	Todd Thompson, P.E., (916) 341-5518
4. Project Location:	Statewide
5. Project Sponsor=s Name and Address:	Same
6. General Plan Designation:	Not applicable
7. Zoning:	Not applicable
8. Description of Project: (Describe the whole action involved, including but not limited to later phases of the project, and any secondary, support, or off-site features necessary for its implementation. Attach additional sheets if necessary.)	See Chapter 2, "Background and Description of Proposed Project"
9. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting: (Briefly describe the project's surroundings)	Statewide
10. Other public agencies whose approval is required: (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement)	None
ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:	
The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hazards & Hazardous Materials <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Utilities / Service Systems	<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture Resources <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hydrology / Water Quality <input type="checkbox"/> Noise <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance
<input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geology / Soils <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use / Planning <input type="checkbox"/> Population / Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation / Traffic <input type="checkbox"/> None With Mitigation	

**DETERMINATION (To be completed by the Lead Agency)**

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

I find that the proposed project **COULD NOT** have a significant effect on the environment, and a **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared. ☐

I find that although the proposed project **COULD** have a significant effect on the environment, there **WILL NOT** be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A **MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared. ☐

I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a significant effect on the environment, and an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required. ☒

I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed. ☐

I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier **EIR** or **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier **EIR** or **NEGATIVE DECLARATION**, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required. ☐

**Original Signed by**

Signature

6/08/05

Date

Stan Martinson

Printed Name

Chief, Division of Water Quality

Title

State Water Resources Control Board

Agency

## EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

1. A brief explanation is required for all answers except “No Impact” answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A “No Impact” answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A “No Impact” answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).
2. All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
3. Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. “Potentially Significant Impact” is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more “Potentially Significant Impact” entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
4. “Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated” applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from “Potentially Significant Impact” to a “Less Than Significant Impact.” The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from “Earlier Analyses,” as described in (5) below, may be cross-referenced).
5. Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
  - a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
  - b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
  - c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are “Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated,” describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
6. Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.
7. Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
8. This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project’s environmental effects in whatever format is selected.
9. The explanation of each issue should identify:
  - the significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
  - the mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES		Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than- significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than- significant Impact	No Impact
<b>I.</b>	<b>Aesthetics. Would the project:</b>				
a)	Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b)	Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c)	Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d)	Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## DISCUSSION

### a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** The proposed project could cause a gradual shift toward the use of more supplemental treatment OWTS or community collection systems instead of conventional systems. Such systems could be installed in a variety of settings in many areas of California, including scenic areas; however, as shown in Exhibit 2, most elements of conventional OWTS are located underground. This also is true for most elements of supplemental treatment systems. While some systems have above-grade components, these elements have a relatively low profile (generally consisting of aboveground piping, tanks, or mounds of soil no more than a few feet high). These elements also are small relative to the residences or commercial establishments that they accompany and are typically covered with soil and vegetation following a relatively short construction period.

Furthermore, installation of new OWTS is primarily associated with new building permits for residences and small businesses or replacement of failing systems; where these are located in scenic areas, they would be associated with other permitted structures. Siting criteria of the local authority would continue to help establish appropriate locations for new structures or modifications to existing structures, including the installation of treatment systems, and would address, on a site-specific basis, the potential for systems to affect designated scenic vistas or resources.

The impact of the proposed project on scenic vistas would be less than significant.

### b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** See response to item (a) above.

### c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** See response to item (a) above.

### d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

**No Impact.** Permanent sources of external lighting are not a feature of OWTS and operation of OWTS would not generate new sources of light or glare. Thus, the proposed project would not create a new source of light and glare.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES		Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than- significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than- significant Impact	No Impact
<b>II. Agricultural Resources.</b>					
In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997, as updated) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. Would the project:					
a)	Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b)	Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c)	Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## DISCUSSION

- a) **Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?**

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** Installation of more supplemental treatment and community collection system OWTS could occur on a wide variety of soil types throughout the state, including areas that could be categorized under the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program as Farmland of Statewide Importance. However, the proposed project would not alter the number of OWTS that would be placed on farmland, nor would it meaningfully, if at all, alter the amount of farmland converted for use to OWTS-related uses. The potential impacts of the proposed project on such farmland are considered less than significant.

- b) **Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?**

**No Impact.** Implementation of the proposed regulations would not affect zoning designations established by local land use jurisdictions. The proposed regulations do not address the types of land uses for which OWTS are appropriate; rather, they establish consistent standards for the functioning (i.e., construction, operation, and maintenance) of treatment systems in whatever locations the ALA or regional water board chooses to approve them. Under existing conditions, most jurisdictions allow OWTS in conjunction with residences in agricultural areas, including properties with Williamson Act contracts; this situation would not change under the proposed statewide OWTS regulations. The project would have no impact on agricultural zoning or Williamson Act contracts.

- c) **Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use?**

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** See the response to item (a) above.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES		Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than- significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than- significant Impact	No Impact
<b>III. Air Quality.</b>					
Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied on to make the following determinations.					
Would the project:					
a)	Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b)	Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c)	Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d)	Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e)	Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## DISCUSSION

### a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

**No Impact.** The proposed project would not alter the number of OWTS that would be constructed in the future, nor would it meaningfully, if at all, alter the amount of land converted to OWTS-related uses. Furthermore, the operation of OWTS systems does not generate criteria pollutants specific to air quality. The proposed project would not affect applicable air quality plans.

### b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?

**No Impact.** See the response to item (a) above.

### c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?

**No Impact.** See the response to item (a) above.

### d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

**No Impact.** See the response to item (a) above.

**e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?**

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** The proposed regulations include provisions that would require new and existing OWTS systems to operate in such a way that no objectionable odors would be emitted (Section 22910[c]). The proposed regulations also contain specific requirements for maintenance and repair of faulty systems. Odors could occur for brief periods in areas immediately surrounding OWTS when septic tank clean-out operations are in progress. This impact is considered less than significant.



ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES		Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-significant Impact	No Impact
<b>IV.</b>	<b>Biological Resources. Would the project:</b>				
a)	Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b)	Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c)	Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d)	Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e)	Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f)	Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## DISCUSSION

- a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?**

**Potentially Significant Impact.** California contains a wide variety of bioregions, from desert environments below sea level, to coastal areas, to alpine areas of 14,000 feet or more in elevation. However, the proposed project would not alter the number of OWTS that would be constructed in these bioregions in the future, nor would it meaningfully, if at all, alter the amount of undeveloped terrestrial habitat converted to OWTS-related uses. Under certain circumstances, the proposed project would affect the water quality of OWTS discharges into groundwater, and this in turn could affect the water quality of surface waters that provide aquatic, riparian or wetland habitat for special-status species. This impact on species that rely on such habitat types is considered potentially significant and will be carried forward for further evaluation in the EIR.

- b) **Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?**

**Potentially Significant Impact.** See the response to item (a) above.

- c) **Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?**

**Potentially Significant Impact.** Siting requirements contained in the proposed statewide OWTS regulations limit installation of treatment systems to areas with at least 5 feet of separation (reduced to no less than 3 feet, in certain circumstances) between the system and seasonal high groundwater for conventional systems, and at least 2 feet of separation for supplemental systems (Section 22912). Percolation of treated effluent into the deeper soil profiles is a critical component of the treatment process for pathogen reduction. For these reasons, OWTS would not be constructed in areas where they could affect wetlands through direct removal or filling. However, OWTS discharges to groundwater could affect surface waters, including wetlands. This impact is considered potentially significant and will be carried forward for further evaluation in the EIR.

- d) **Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?**

**Potentially Significant Impact.** As described under question a) above, the proposed project could affect aquatic, riparian or wetland habitats and the species that depend on such habitats. Therefore, changes in the quality of OWTS discharges to groundwater could affect surface waters that serve as migratory corridors or nursery sites for aquatic species. This impact is considered potentially significant and will be carried forward for further evaluation in the EIR.

- e) **Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?**

**No Impact.** The proposed statewide OWTS regulations address construction, operation, and maintenance of individual treatment systems for residences and small commercial sites, and do not address local plans, policies or ordinances protecting biological resources. Therefore, potential conflicts with such plans, policies or ordinances are not expected.

- f) **Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?**

**No Impact.** See the response to item (e) above.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES		Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-significant Impact	No Impact
<b>V.</b>	<b>Cultural Resources. Would the project:</b>				
a)	Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b)	Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c)	Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d)	Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## DISCUSSION

### a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5?

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** The proposed project would not alter the number of OWTS that would be constructed in the future, nor would it meaningfully, if at all, alter the amount of land converted to OWTS-related uses. Therefore, the potential impacts of the proposed project on any type of cultural resource, including historical resources, are considered less than significant.

### b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** See the response to item (a) above.

### c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** See the response to item (a) above.

### d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** See the response to item (a) above.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES		Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than- significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than- significant Impact	No Impact
<b>VI.</b>	<b>Geology and Soils. Would the project:</b>				
a)	Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i)	Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? (Refer to California Geological Survey Special Publication 42.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii)	Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii)	Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv)	Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b)	Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c)	Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d)	Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994, as updated), creating substantial risks to life or property?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e)	Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## DISCUSSION

Although all items in Section VI, "Geology and Soils," are identified as less-than-significant impacts, the EIR will describe the major hydrogeologic and soil conditions found in California and how these influence OWTS siting decisions. Potential effects on soil chemistry and morphology from changes in the water quality of OWTS effluent also will be addressed in the EIR.

- a) **Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:**
  - i) **Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? (Refer to California Geological Survey Special Publication 42.)**

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** The proposed project would not alter the number of OWTS that would be constructed in the future, nor would it meaningfully, if at all, alter the amount of land converted to OWTS-related uses. Therefore, the proposed project would not likely cause significant seismic- or landslide-related hazards.

**ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?**

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** See the response to item (a)(i) above.

**iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?**

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** See the response to item (a)(i) above.

**iv) Landslides?**

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** See the response to item (a)(i) above.

**b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?**

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** The proposed project would not alter the number of OWTS that would be constructed in the future, nor would it meaningfully, if at all, alter the amount of land converted to OWTS-related uses. Therefore, potentially significant soil erosion or loss of topsoil impacts are not expected.

**c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?**

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** See the response to item (a)(i) above.

**d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994, as updated), creating substantial risks to life or property?**

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** See the response to item (a)(i) above.

**e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?**

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** The proposed statewide OWTS regulations provide the framework for determining appropriate soil conditions on which to operate OWTS. For this reason, the proposed project includes standards for the installation and operation of OWTS, including adjustments based on soil types. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES		Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-significant Impact	No Impact
<b>VII.</b>	<b>Hazards and Hazardous Materials. Would the project:</b>				
a)	Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b)	Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and/or accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c)	Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d)	Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e)	For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f)	For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g)	Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
h)	Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## DISCUSSION

### a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

Hazardous materials include hazardous substances and hazardous wastes, which are defined and regulated under several federal and state statutes and associated regulations. California's Health and Safety Code (Section 25501[o]) designates hazardous materials as any material that, because of its quantity, concentration, or physical or chemical characteristics, poses a significant present or potential hazard to human health and safety or to the environment if released into the workplace or the environment. The proposed statewide OWTS regulations address treatment of household wastewater, up to the level of high-strength wastewater, and OWTS covered under

the proposed statewide OWTS regulations are not permitted to be used to treat or dispose of hazardous wastes (Section 22910[a]).

However, materials considered hazardous substances could enter OWTS septic tanks and dispersal fields through the use of commercial or household cleaning and personal care products that may be discharged into the sanitary system, and through the use of commercial septic tank maintenance products such as cleaners or additives. For the purposes of the proposed OWTS regulations, hazardous materials that could be discharged to OWTS include, but are not limited to, such materials as defined under the Health and Safety Code Section 25501: (1) substances for which the manufacturer is required to prepare a Material Safety and Data Sheet pursuant to California's Hazardous Substances Information and Training Act; (2) radioactive materials; or (3) materials considered to be a human or animal carcinogen. Commercial chemical products, such as bleach, detergents, scale and stain removals, solvents, and high-strength cleaning products may contain hazardous substances or otherwise qualify as a hazardous material.

In general, the intent of the proposed OWTS regulations is to reduce contaminant discharges and improve monitoring and performance of OWTS. Nevertheless, in response to new requirements included in the proposed regulations, regional or local regulatory agencies or private property owners may change the amount of hazardous materials discharged to septic tanks and OWTS dispersal systems over time. For example, a potential response to more frequent septic tank inspections and the results of groundwater monitoring could be an increase in the use of septic tank cleaners or additives. This could result in the detection of hazardous substances associated with OWTS that subsequently leads to corrective actions, as required by Section 22945 of the proposed regulations.

By definition and according to applicable regulations, hazardous substances are considered hazardous in their original form and concentrations. In general, the concentration of these substances in domestic septage would be expected to be small given that the large majority of sewage is water and fecal material. However, hazardous substances discharged into OWTS could reside in the accumulated sewage solids and soluble or dissolved hazardous substances can be subsequently discharged to the effluent dispersal system. Therefore, two types of potential impacts are considered in this section in relation to the question above:

- (a)(1) potential hazards related to septage pumping, transport, treatment, and disposal, and
- (a)(2) potential hazards related to discharge of OWTS effluent into groundwater and surface water

**(a)(1) Less-than-Significant Impact—Potential hazards related to septage pumping, transport, treatment and disposal.** Section 22910(s) of the proposed regulations would require mandatory septic tank inspections for solids accumulation upon property transfer that may result in an increase in the frequency of septic tank pumping and septage disposal. However, the potential increased frequency of voluntary or mandatory septage disposal would not be expected to appreciably change the risk of exposure to hazardous material or releases into the environment because the existing and comprehensive septage handling, treatment, and disposal procedures would continue and such procedures protect public health and the environment. For example, septage must be disposed of at licensed septage handling facilities where contact with the general public is not possible.

**(a)(2) Potentially Significant Impact—Potential hazards related to discharge of OWTS effluent into groundwater and surface water.** Hazardous substances that pass through the septic tank and are discharged to groundwater through the dispersal system could pose an environmental or public health risk. Hazardous substances that percolate to groundwater are regulated through applicable groundwater and surface water quality standards. It is not possible to determine the significance of this potential impact without further study. Because the exposure of potential hazardous substances would be through discharges to groundwater or surface water, this potential impact will be carried forward for further evaluation in the Hydrology and Water Quality section

of the EIR (which is covered by Section VIII of this checklist), and related impacts will be assessed using applicable water quality standards.

**b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and/or accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?**

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** The analysis of potential releases of hazardous materials into the environment through routine OWTS operations is described above in the response to item (a). Any hazardous materials discharged into septic tanks may then reside in the accumulated sewage solids. Subsequently, there is a small potential for accidental release of hazardous materials in the sewage sludge when septic tanks are pumped and the accumulated solids are transported to septage handling facilities. As described above, implementation of the proposed OWTS regulations may result in an increase in the frequency of septic tank pumping and solids transport and disposal. Any change in the frequency of voluntary or mandatory septic tank pumping would incrementally change the risk of accidental release. However, the potential impact is considered less than significant because the risk of accidental release is anticipated to be low, the quantity of waste material that may be discharged would typically be limited to the small quantity carried by individual pumping trucks, and it is anticipated that accidental spills would be cleaned up in accordance with normal emergency response service (i.e., fire, police) directives and septage hauler licensing requirements.

**c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?**

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** See the responses to items (a) and (b) above. While accidental spills of hazardous materials contained in pumped OWTS septage solids from septic tanks could occur during transport to septage handling facilities. The incremental risk of those accidents occurring within a school zone are not likely to be measurable, and is thus considered less than significant.

**d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code §65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?**

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** In general, the potential for disclosure of buried hazardous wastes in private real estate transactions is limited in California because the federal and state laws pertaining to hazardous materials and waste management are typically applicable only to public agency and nongovernmental entities. Often the historical land uses of a site, particularly in urbanized areas, is not fully known. Given these circumstances, the potential for development of OWTS on lands that contain hazardous wastes does currently exist and would continue to exist in the foreseeable future. However, the large majority of OWTS are used in rural areas for residential housing. With rare exception, rural areas in California typically reflect past agrarian (i.e., farming, ranching, timber, open space) land uses that have not changed. There are exceptions, such as formerly operated industrial facilities that are not readily apparent from visual inspection of the existing surface conditions and military bases that have undergone closure procedures and lands dispersed for general sale to the public. However, these cases are generally known, documented, and subject to the full force of regulatory policies, regulations, and procedures under state and federal hazardous waste laws.

**e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?**

**No Impact.** Because the proposed regulations would be applicable statewide, there is no way to know at this time if OWTS would be installed within 2 miles of a public airport; however, installation, operation, and maintenance



of OWTS would not involve any activities that could result in a safety hazard for people residing or working near an airport. No impact would result.

**f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?**

**No Impact.** As described in item (e) above, installation, operation, and maintenance of OWTS would not involve any activities that could result in a safety hazard for people residing or working near an airport. No impact would result.

**g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?**

**No Impact.** Installation, operation, and maintenance of OWTS would take place primarily on residential and small commercial sites and would not interfere with emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans. No impact would result.

**h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?**

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** The proposed project would not alter the number of OWTS that would be constructed in the future, nor would it meaningfully, if at all, alter the amount of land converted to OWTS-related uses. Therefore, potentially significant impacts involving an increase in the risk of wildland fires are not expected.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES		Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than- significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than- significant Impact	No Impact
<b>VIII.</b>	<b>Hydrology and Water Quality. Would the project:</b>				
a)	Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b)	Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level that would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c)	Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial on- or off-site erosion or siltation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d)	Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in on- or off-site flooding?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e)	Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f)	Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g)	Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h)	Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i)	Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
j)	Result in inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## DISCUSSION

### a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?

**(a)(1) Potentially Significant Impact—Violate water quality standards.** By using a combination of uniform prescriptive and performance standards, the proposed project is expected to change the

way some OWTS operate, or function, after they are installed as part of new construction, or if an existing system is repaired or replaced. The proposed project also is expected to cause a gradual shift towards the use of more supplemental treatment OWTS or community collection systems in place of some conventional systems. All of these likely consequences of the proposed project could lead to significant water quality impacts. The reasons for this conclusion are briefly described below and this issue will be addressed in more detail in the OWTS EIR.

Despite the fact the proposed project may lead to a reduction in the amount of wastewater pollutants being discharged to groundwater in some situations, or no change in such discharges in other situations, the relevant provisions of applicable California statutes and regulations pertaining to groundwater and surface water quality protection may still be violated. For example, the surface water and groundwater WQOs for nitrate-nitrogen found in regional water board Basin Plans (typically set at the primary drinking water quality standard of 10 milligrams per liter [mg/l] as nitrogen) may still be violated. Many studies show that wastewater effluent from conventional OWTS, and systems with supplemental treatment, may exceed this value where OWTS discharges reach groundwater and at other points down gradient or downstream. For example, and as reported in USEPA 2002 based on work by Siegrist 2001, total nitrogen concentrations from conventional OWTS range from 40 to 100 mg/l. Nitrogen concentrations from supplemental treatment systems with aerobic units are typically 25 to 60 mg/l. Only with supplemental treatment that includes nitrogen removal recycling can nitrogen in OWTS effluent be reduced to as low as 10 to 30 mg/l. The same study asserts that under the best soil conditions, 3 to 5 feet of good soil can reduce nitrogen concentrations only by about 10 to 20 percent.

Potential violations of nitrate WQOs, bacterial and other types of WQOs, along with potential impairment of related beneficial uses, will be addressed by the EIR. The WQOs are designed to protect both the environment and public health and will be used by the EIR's water quality analysis to help determine the potential for significant impacts and the need for related mitigation.

**(a)(2) Less-than-Significant Impact—Violate waste discharge requirements.** WDRs and WDR waivers implement the regional water boards basin plans. As they do now, regional water boards would continue to issue WDRs or WDR waivers with specific conditions to be followed once the proposed regulations are implemented. To install an OWTS, an applicable permit from the regional water board or ALA would be required and the permits would require compliance with the regional water boards basin plan. Where a WDR is used to implement the basin plan, occasional WDR violations could occur if septic systems do not function properly, but monitoring provisions in the proposed regulations would be expected to identify such circumstances and remediate them. Therefore, violations of WDRs would not be common and this potential impact would be less than significant.

**b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre existing nearby wells would drop to a level that would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?**

**No Impact.** Installation and maintenance of OWTS systems does not use groundwater supplies. Further, these systems are designed to treat wastewater through the action of water flow through sediments into the deeper layers of the soil horizon, in most cases resulting in groundwater recharge. Thus, the proposed project would not lower the levels of groundwater tables.

- c) **Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial on- or off-site erosion or siltation?**

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** The proposed project would not alter the number of OWTS that would be constructed in the future, nor would it meaningfully, if at all, alter the amount of land converted to OWTS-related uses. Therefore, this potential impact is considered less than significant.

- d) **Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in on- or off-site flooding?**

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** See the response to item (c) above.

- e) **Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?**

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** See the response to item (c) above.

- f) **Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?**

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** See the response to item (c) above.

- g) **Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?**

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** See the response to item (c) above.

- h) **Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows?**

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** See the response to item (c) above.

- i) **Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?**

**No Impact.** OWTS do not contain components that could cause flooding. In the case of failure of a septic tank, loss, injury, or death as a result of water escaping from the system almost never occurs because the volume of water is relatively small, and OWTS are typically sited downhill from dwellings. Thus, the proposed project would not increase the risk of flooding.

- j) **Result in inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?**

**No Impact.** Siting criteria and regulations of the local authority would continue to establish appropriate locations for installation of treatment systems and would address, on a site-specific basis, the potential for a system to fail as a result of seiche, tsunami, or mudflow. Even in these circumstances, however, failure of a treatment system would not result in inundation because the volume of water that might escape from a system in rare circumstances is relatively small.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES		Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than- significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than- significant Impact	No Impact
<b>IX.</b>	<b>Land Use and Planning. Would the project:</b>				
a)	Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b)	Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to, a general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c)	Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## DISCUSSION

Although all items in Section IX, “Land Use and Planning,” are identified as having no impact, the EIR will describe local land use regulations and compliance processes that accompany approval and siting of OWTS throughout the state. The EIR will also evaluate the potential for land use–related effects, including potential changes in development patterns in areas of the state, as part of the EIR’s growth inducement analysis.

### a) Physically divide an established community?

**No Impact.** The proposed project would not alter the number of OWTS that would be constructed in the future, nor would it meaningfully, if at all, alter the amount of land converted to OWTS-related uses. For these reasons, the proposed project would not physically divide an established community. Thus, there would be no impact.

### b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to, a general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** The proposed project would not alter the number of OWTS that would be constructed in the future, nor would it meaningfully, if at all, alter the amount of land converted to OWTS-related uses. Implementation of the proposed regulations would establish performance standards, siting requirements, and operational characteristics for existing and new OWTS throughout California. The proposed project would not change the current regulatory environment in California; land use and zoning decisions to allow, restrict, and regulate OWTS installation, operation, and maintenance would continue to be made by local agencies and regional water boards. The proposed project also is not expected to conflict with local land use decisions; for this reason, this potential impact is considered less than significant.

### c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?

**No Impact.** As described in the response to item (b) above, the proposed statewide OWTS regulations are not expected to conflict with local land use and zoning decisions, and similarly, conflicts with local habitat conservation plans or natural community conservation plans are not expected.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES		Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than- significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than- significant Impact	No Impact
<b>X.</b>	<b>Mineral Resources. Would the project:</b>				
a)	Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b)	Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## DISCUSSION

### a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** While OWTS are installed in a wide variety of rock formations and geologic conditions statewide, the proposed project would not alter the number of OWTS that would be constructed in the future, nor would it meaningfully, if at all, alter the amount of land converted to OWTS-related uses. In addition, siting criteria of the local authority would continue to establish appropriate locations for installation of treatment systems and would address, on a site-specific basis any potential for a system to result in loss of availability of mineral resources. This impact is considered less than significant.

### b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** See the response to item (a) above.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES		Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than- significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than- significant Impact	No Impact
<b>XI.</b>	<b>Noise. Would the project result in:</b>				
a)	Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or in other applicable local, state, or federal standards?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b)	Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c)	A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d)	A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e)	For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f)	For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## DISCUSSION

- a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or in other applicable local, state, or federal standards?**

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** The proposed project would not alter the number of OWTS that would be constructed in the future, nor would it meaningfully, if at all, alter the amount of land converted to OWTS-related uses. Operation and maintenance of OWTS are not typically noise-producing activities. Supplemental treatment systems may have mechanical components that produce a low level of noise during operation. Because OWTS are generally installed near residences and small commercial enterprises, the sound levels produced by the system are designed to be minimal. Maintenance activities, such as pumping of septic tanks, take place occasionally and could involve higher levels of noise disturbance, but these activities are temporary and occur only periodically (in the case of pumping, once every few years). For these reasons, the proposed project is considered to have a less-than-significant noise impact.

- b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?**

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** See the response to item (a) above.

- c) **A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?**

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** See the response to item (a) above.

- d) **A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?**

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** See the response to item (a) above.

- e) **For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?**

**No Impact.** Installation, operation, and maintenance of OWTS under the proposed project would not involve any activities that could expose people residing or working near an airport to excessive noise levels. No impact would result.

- f) **For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?**

**No Impact.** See the response to item (e) above.



ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES		Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than- significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than- significant Impact	No Impact
<b>XII.</b>	<b>Population and Housing. Would the project:</b>				
a)	Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b)	Displace substantial numbers of existing homes, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c)	Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## DISCUSSION

- a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?**

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** OWTS are generally installed in rural areas as part of a building permit for a new home or small business. As such, these systems tend to be installed in areas where population growth is taking place. However, the proposed regulations are not expected to allow installation of OWTS in areas and on properties where they are not allowed under current regulations. As a result, implementation of the proposed project would not have the general effect of inducing population growth in areas throughout the state. This impact is considered less than significant but, nevertheless, will be carried forward for further evaluation in the EIR using public comments received during the EIR's scoping process.

- b) Displace substantial numbers of existing homes, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?**

**No Impact.** Installation of OWTS typically accompanies housing construction and would not displace housing. Thus, there would be no impact.

- c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?**

**No Impact.** Installation of OWTS typically accompanies housing construction and would not displace people. Thus, there would be no impacts.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than- significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than- significant Impact	No Impact
<b>XIII. Public Services. Would the project:</b>				
a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## DISCUSSION

- a) **Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:**

**Fire protection?**

**Police protection?**

**Schools?**

**Parks?**

**No Impact.** OWTS are privately owned facilities operated by individual homeowners or small businesses. These systems do not require fire or police protection, educational or recreational services to construct, operate, or maintain them. Thus, no impacts would occur related to these types of services.

**Other public facilities?**

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** OWTS are privately owned facilities operated by individual homeowners or small businesses. As will be assessed further in the EIR's economics and fiscal impact assessment, the proposed project could increase the staffing requirements of the State Water Board, regional water boards, or ALAs. However, if such staffing increases would be required, they would likely be minor and would not be expected to be large enough to require the construction of new facilities. Therefore, such potential impacts would be less than significant.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES		Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than- significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than- significant Impact	No Impact
<b>XIV. Recreation. Would the project:</b>					
a)	Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b)	Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## DISCUSSION

- a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?**

**No Impact.** Installation of OWTS generally occurs in rural areas as part of new home or small business construction. OWTS are designed solely for the purpose of treating wastewater, and are not related to recreational facilities. As such, the proposed project would have no impact on the use of recreational facilities.

- b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?**

**No Impact.** See the response to item (a) above.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES		Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-significant Impact	No Impact
<b>XV.</b>	<b>Transportation/Traffic. Would the project:</b>				
a)	Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b)	Exceed, individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c)	Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d)	Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e)	Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f)	Result in inadequate parking capacity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g)	Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## DISCUSSION

- a) Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?**

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** Installation of OWTS generally occurs in rural areas where traffic loads are relatively light. Construction activities associated with OWTS supplemental treatment installation would generally include use of a backhoe, a dump truck, and possibly one additional piece of construction equipment operating for less than 1 week. Operation and maintenance activities would include an increase in septic tank inspections and perhaps pumping, but related vehicle trips would occur infrequently and on roads where traffic loads are relatively light. The proposed project would not alter the number of OWTS that would be constructed in the future, nor would it meaningfully, if at all, alter the amount of land converted to OWTS-related uses. The proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact on traffic conditions.

- b) Exceed, individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?**

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** As discussed above in the response to item (a), OWTS supplemental treatment installation and maintenance could increase traffic on local and rural roadways, but by a minimal amount and on an infrequent basis. This impact is considered less than significant.

- c) **Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?**

**No Impact.** Installation of OWTS would have no impact on air traffic patterns.

- d) **Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?**

**No Impact.** All OWTS are subject to local codes and most local codes do not allow OWTS to be installed directly adjacent to a roadway. Accordingly this would have no impact on traffic hazards beyond that of existing conditions, and as established by local agencies.. Therefore, the proposed project would likely not affect traffic hazards due to a design feature or incompatible uses.

- e) **Result in inadequate emergency access?**

**No Impact.** Because the proposed project would not increase the number of OWTS installed over time, OWTS-related traffic patterns or emergency access to either the site of a treatment system or surrounding areas would likely not be affected.

- f) **Result in inadequate parking capacity?**

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** As described in item (a) above, OWTS-related construction and maintenance activities could increase slightly due to the proposed project, but would involve a minimal number of workers working in rural areas for brief periods of time. This potential impact would be less than significant.

- g) **Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?**

**No Impact.** For the same reasons described in items (a) through (f) above, and since alternative transportation systems are typically found in more urbanized areas than those where OWTS are typically found, implementation of the proposed regulations would likely have no impact on alternative transportation systems.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES		Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-significant Impact	No Impact
<b>XVI.</b>	<b>Utilities and Service Systems. Would the project:</b>				
a)	Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b)	Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c)	Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d)	Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e)	Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand, in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f)	Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g)	Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## DISCUSSION

### a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?

**Less-than-Significant Impact.** See the related discussion in Section VIII, "Hydrology and Water Quality," item (a)(2).

### b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

**Potentially Significant Impact.** While the proposed project is not expected to increase the number of OWTS installed over time, it could lead to an increase in the expansion of existing community collection systems, the construction of new collection systems as opposed to individual OWTS, or although unlikely, an expansion in existing sewer system conveyance capacity or in the capacity of centralized treatment plants. Such possibilities could result if the proposed regulations are considerably more restrictive than existing OWTS regulations being enforced. Section 22910(s) of the proposed regulations requires septic tank inspections upon every transfer of ownership. This may lead to more frequent septic tank pumping. More frequent pumping of septage from septic tanks could lead to an increase in the volume of septage that would need to be treated at centralized treatment plants. Also, the relatively high costs of most supplemental treatment OWTS, which can often be twice the cost of conventional systems, may also make the option of constructing community collection systems and consolidating

financial resources attractive to members of a neighborhood or community where local siting conditions are challenging or not appropriate for individual systems. Or, the proposed regulations' groundwater monitoring requirement may lead to more collection systems if local drinking water supplies are being contaminated by individual OWTS.

Thus, the proposed project could lead to more community collection system construction, the expansion of existing sewer lines or treatment plant capacities. Such construction or expansion activities have the potential to cause significant environmental impacts and these potential impacts will be assessed further in the EIR.

**c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?**

**No Impact.** The proposed project addresses installation, operation, and maintenance of OWTS systems, which operate independently of any storm drainage system that may be present in a community. Impacts on storm water drainage facilities are not expected.

**d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?**

**No Impact.** The proposed project addresses installation, operation, and maintenance of OWTS systems, and would not impact water supply entitlements.

**e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand, in addition to the provider's existing commitments?**

**No Impact.** This potential impact is not expected because OWTS operate independently of the centralized wastewater treatment facilities operated by treatment providers. Thus, there would be no impact. The potential environmental impacts associated with the expansion of existing community collection systems or sewer systems connected to centralized treatment facilities are addressed under item b) above.

**f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?**

**Potentially Significant Impact.** As noted under question b) above, the proposed project could increase the amount of OWTS septage that would be treated at centralized treatment plants or disposed of in septage ponds lined in compliance with Title 27, or through prescribed land application where public contact does not occur. Treatment of septage at centralized treatment plants would generate a solid waste byproduct referred to as biosolids. Biosolids are typically disposed of in landfills; if existing landfill capacities are not sufficient, the proposed project could indirectly cause an expansion in landfill capacities. Thus, this issue needs to be addressed in the EIR and an increase in the need for solid waste disposal has the potential to cause significant environmental impacts.

**g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?**

**No Impact.** The proposed project would not change the manner in which solid waste is created, handled or disposed of. Thus, there is no reason to believe the proposed project would change how solid waste handling and disposal regulations are complied with.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-significant Impact	No Impact
<b>XVII. Mandatory Findings of Significance.</b>				
a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or threatened species, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Authority: Public Resources Code Sections 21083 and 21087. Reference: Public Resources Code Sections 21080(c), 21080.1, 21080.3, 21082.1, 21083, 21083.3, 21093, 21094, 21151; <i>Sundstrom v. County of Mendocino</i> , 202 Cal.App.3d 296 (1988); <i>Leonoff v. Monterey Board of Supervisors</i> , 222 Cal.App.3d 1337 (1990).				

## DISCUSSION

- a) **Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or threatened species, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?**

**Potentially Significant Impact.** As described in Section IV, “Biological Resources,” the potential exists for the proposed project to affect aquatic special-status plant and wildlife species and sensitive natural communities throughout the state. Without further analysis, it is not possible to rule out the possibility that the project could substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a protected species. These issues will be carried forward for further evaluation in the EIR.

As described in Section V, “Cultural Resources,” impacts on archaeological and historical resources would be less than significant.



- b) **Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)**

**Potentially Significant Impact.** Implementation of the proposed statewide OWTS regulations has the potential to cause impacts that are individually limited but cumulatively considerable. Possible areas of cumulative effects include violation of water quality objectives, loss of habitat for aquatic special-status species, and a potential increase in the demand for septage treatment at centralized treatment plants or the disposal of biosolids at landfills. These issues will be carried forward for further evaluation in the EIR.

- c) **Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?**

**Potentially Significant Impact.** The proposed project has the potential to affect water quality and public health in ways that could cause substantial adverse effects on human beings. These issues will be carried forward for further evaluation in the EIR.